# Victims PIC

## Text

#### Reject the aff’s use of the word *victim* and embrace the word *survivor.*

#### First, representations of our language affect our ability to act effectively and interact with others. Haste 98:

Helen Haste, [PhD of Psychology at the University of Bath], “Communitarianism and the Social Construction of Morality”, 1998. NC

Communitarian thinkersstart from a very different psychological tradition. They emphasise the **primacy of language and social interaction in the generation of meaning [is important]**. Taylor argues that **human life is ‘fundamentally dialogic …. We become full human agents, capable of understanding ourselves, and hence defining an identity, through our acquisition of rich human languages of expression.**’ (1991 p 32). This aligns the communitarian ontological position with social constructionists like John Shotter (1993) and Rom HarrZ (HarrZ and Gillett, 1994) who argue that the primary human reality is face-to-face conversation. **If social interaction is the crucible of meaning, then the child learns about morality through discourse and through social practices**, both explicit and implicit. **The ‘meaning’ of something – including the meaning of our own identity and our morality – depends on what is comprehensible and recognized within our social community. Social beings create their identity through shared discourse and language** (Shotter, 1993). Communities are multiple; we are members of many communities which each offer us identity, and personal meaning, and within each different elements and skills are salient. **Cultural narratives, stories and traditions feed directly into our identity, signaling valued attributes and behaviours, and giving an explanation for our past and present**. Crucially, we also recognize that these are shared by those whom we thus define as members of our community. **A moral obligation can only have meaning within a social context.** Richard Shweder describes taboos and practices found amongst rural Hindus in India which are quite morally meaningless to Americans, because they are associated with beliefs about pollution which are not shared (Shweder et al, 1987). However practices may be widely condemned, but for different reasons – believing that rape is wrong because it defiles the victim’s purity, is very different from seeing it as wrong because treats her as an object rather than a person.

#### framing the abused as “victim” denies women their humanity. Dunn 04:

Jennifer L. Dunn [Professor of Sociology at Southern Illinois University], "“Victims” and “Survivors”: Emerging Vocabularies of Motive for “Battered Women Who Stay”" Sociological Inquiry Vol. 75, Issue 1, p. 1-30(Dec 2004) FD

“Barry discusses what she calls “victimism”: “In creating new definitions we always risk incorporating the rigidity in the new that exemplified the old . . . **Creating the role and status of the victim is the practice** I call *victimism* . . . **creates a framework for others to know her not as a person but as a victim, someone to whom violence was done** . . . **Victimism is an objectification which establishes new standards for defining experience; those standards dismiss any question of will, and deny that the woman even while enduring sexual violence is a living, changing, growing, interactive person**. (1979:38)” In this excerpt, Barry defines victim typifications as problematic, precisely because **this identity denies women their agency; they are people lacking “will” and to whom things “are done”** (1979:38).”

#### Third, the rhetoric of “victim” causes a loss of agency, instructing others to perceive the abused as a helpless, passive, individual. Dunn-2

Jennifer L. Dunn [Professor of Sociology at Southern Illinois University], "“Victims” and “Survivors”: Emerging Vocabularies of Motive for “Battered Women Who Stay”" Sociological Inquiry Vol. 75, Issue 1, p. 1-30(Dec 2004) FD

In sum, **the cultural context within which typifications of battered women as “survivors” appear is one characterized by multiple voices problematizing the identity of “victim**,” for a variety of reasons. Feminists argue about the political implications of its overpurification and polarity in a binary classification. **Therapists want victims to leave behind their victim identities as part of healing from trauma, and shelter workers and battered women present realities far more complex than simplistic imagery can encompass**. Importantly, **the term “victim” has accrued associations from which even those who are harmed by social problems distance themselves**.5 While the reasons for this are complex, they have mostly to do with the lack of agency that appears, in the logic of this process, to define victimization. As Holstein and Miller argue, **to “victimize someone instructs others** [is] to understand the person as **a rather** passive**, indeed helpless, recipient of injury or injustice . . . [this denies] ‘disables’ a** **person to the extent that victim status appropriates one’s personal identity as a competent efficacious actor** (1997:43)”.

#### Fourth, “victim” denotes entrapment while “survivor” implies decision making and agency. Dunn-3

Jennifer L. Dunn [Professor of Sociology at Southern Illinois University], "“Victims” and “Survivors”: Emerging Vocabularies of Motive for “Battered Women Who Stay”" Sociological Inquiry Vol. 75, Issue 1, p. 1-30(Dec 2004) FD

“Early **images of battered women as** (mostly) **“victims” and** more recent images of battered women **as “survivors**” **are very different ideal types**. **To the extent that victims are presented as trapped, and survivors, conversely, are shown as making choices, they are constructed in ways that place them at opposite poles of an agency continuum.** **The resulting discursive dichotomy influences people in several important social problem arenas** (Lamb 1996; Picart 2003), **and in many of these, the latter representation has come to be preferred**. **This occurs even when referring to women who remain in violent relationships, and who thus could be arguably not yet assured of their survival**. Why? How does the image of a battered woman who is a “survivor” differ from the image of a “victim”?”

#### And, if the alternative solves 100% of the AFF, you should vote on a net benefit even if it doesn’t link to a standard. A: it is literally the only offense in the debate! You have nothing else to vote on. B: Every conception of morality would agree, holding all else equal that victimization is bad and agency is good.